2: Lorimer T-3 (1920–4; 1934–5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

MARRIAGE IN HUNZA

889 One day when we were visiting a wine-press, far below the old fort and its graveyards, I made friends with a dear little boy of five who seemed exceptionally active and intelligent, even in a country where all children are peculiarly alive and bright. A beautiful old woman joined us, her handsome face framed by two becoming silver plaits. "Tawálut must be your grandson," I ventured. "'Deed then and he's not," she retorted, "he's my great-grandson. His father was my favourite grandson, and when the poor wife died at this baby's birth, I took and suckled him myself"—a feat with which not many of our great-grandmothers could compete. But of course if you marry at sixteen, you may with luck be a great-grandmother by fifty. Still, it was a good effort, and the boy was an excellent witness to her vitality.

• [162] 147 The Burusho population is not large, ten thousand or so at most, and the ramification of well-remembered pedigrees—the humblest can record his genealogy for an astounding number of generations back—brings it about that all families seem ultimately related to one another. It may be this racial purity, judiciously combined with avoidance of close in-breeding, that has produced a stock so markedly fit and healthy. Travelling up through Astor, Gilgit, and Nagir to Hunza, the strong contrast in physical fitness and general intelligence is apparent to the most casual observer; and anyone who knows the races of the Agency will engage a Hunza servant in preference to any other.

585 Marriages normally take place in winter when the people have leisure to give thought to new alliances. The solemn betrothal, presided over by a khalifa, is the effective part of the ceremony. It is usually performed in the bride's house in a semi-private gathering attended only by the members of the families concerned. We were most anxious to be allowed to see one, but by no means hopeful of securing the privilege, to which of course we had not the slightest claim. The servants promised to negotiate matters if possible, and at last Dádo brought us word one day that a girl-relation of Sagi's was about to be betrothed and her people were willing to invite us, but said: "We are poor folk, and our house is humble and we feel

In Lorimer L-S (1930-4; 1934-5) 1935 AVT Burusho AVT

123 Hispár, Barpu and other large glaciers. Henceforth until Chalt is reached, where it turns South, the river forms the boundary between Hunza on the North and Nagir on the South. Chalt itself and the Chapot valley which debouches into it belong to Nagir. Otherwise Nagir is confined, generally speaking, to the valley of the Hispar glacier and Nagir river and the northern slopes of the Kailas range, the crest of which forms the dividing line between it and Gilgit.

On the extreme East Hunza marches with the Oprang valley in Chinese territory and southwards with Baltistan, but the mountain range which separates these regions is scarcely surmountable (v. Text XXVIII). On the extreme West again, Hunza and Nagir territory terminates on a lofty range which runs roughly North and South and is only traversable with difficulty by a couple of passes, the Chillinji (17,000 ft.) and the Daintar (15,210). Beyond lies the sparsely-inhabited valley of Ishkoman, which again is bounded on its western side by a North and South range of mountains on the further side of which is situated the Wershigüm valley, known officially as the Yasin 'Ilāqa. This Wershigum valley is the habitat of the Werchikwār language, a variant form of Burushaski, to which brief reference is made in this work.

133 487 From the West of Hunza to the East of Wershigum is as the crow flies a mere 20 or 30 miles, but the traveller will spend six days and cover some 115 miles in making his way from Chalt via Gilgit and Gupis to Yasin. Such is this country where cross-country travel is impossible and practicable routes can be found only by following the natural lines of least resistance, and that not without pain.

361 162 I have now placed our language on the map, approximately, but greater precision is required. In the first place we have to take account of the fact that the bulk of Hunza and the eastern portion of Nagir are uninhabited and uninhabitable. Permanent population exists only on the elevated terraces that skirt in places the sides of the river valleys.

3t Lorimer L-3 (1920-4; 1934-8) 1935 AVT Burusho AVT

In the second place we have to note that the population of Hunza and Nagir is neither linguistically nor ethnologically homogeneous. Viewing the territories as a whole, Burushaski occupies only a limited central position. It is legitimate perhaps to see in this an indication that the country has been subject to more or less peaceful penetration from the periphery, but that it has never been overwhelmed by any flood of conquest or organised immigration. We may picture Burushaski as here standing at bay — a language which has once covered a much larger area and has gradually been driven in on its least assailable territory, or has been displaced and pushed back to a final refuge.

The country with its physical savageness and poverty could never have attracted the ambition or cupidity of any sane conqueror, and with easier routes available to the West there is little reason to believe that any serious invader has traversed or even penetrated it in force. Against this argument, however, are to be set the efforts of the Dogras of Jammu and Kashmir to penetrate and master the country in the nineteenth century. Their aim was doubtless to strengthen their position in Gilgit.

The relative strengths of the languages current in Hunza and Nagir are set out in the following tables, which are based on figures collected for the 1931 Census, and on the results of private enquiries as to the language spoken in each individual village.

District	Number speaking			Total Population 1931 Census
	Burushaski	Shiná	Wakhi	
Hunza . . .	9,938	1,184	2,411	13,533
Nagir . . .	10,362	3,293	—	13,655
Total . . .	20,300	4,477	2,411	27,188

To obtain the absolute total numbers of known Burushaski-speakers 513 must be added to the total of the first column on

3c Lorimer L-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1936 AV7 Burusho AV7

●162 account of 512 Burushaski-speakers recorded in the 1931 Census as resident in the Gilgit Wazarat, and one as resident in North Kashmir. The total thus becomes 20,813[1].

The local distribution of these linguistic groups has now to be considered. On examination it will be found that they fall in the main within definite and unbroken geographical limits. In Hunza from the North southwards down the Herber valley, to and including Galmit the population are Wakhis, speaking Wakhi, with the exception of the inhabitants of Khudâbâd (population 97), Nazimâbâd (82) and Misgâr (174). Proceeding down, southwards and westwards, through Hunza, the rest of the population are Burushaski-speaking with the exception of the two villages, Hindi (977) and Mâyûn (207) whose primary language is Shiná.

In Nagir there are no Wakhi-speakers, but the Burushaski-Shina dividing line falls at practically the same point as in Hunza, viz. at Minapin opposite Hindi. From and including Minapin down the valley, with the exception of Sikandarâbâd (406, a recent settlement) and Chalt (567), the people of Nagir are primarily Shina-speakers.

162 191 It is to be remarked, however, that these radical linguistic distinctions are to a large extent masked, if not superficially deleted, by bilingualism. I believe that all Shina-speakers of both Hunza and Nagir readily understand and speak Burushaski. This is not so with the Wakhis, of whom only a few know the language of their neighbours. On the other hand the Wakhis have imposed their own language on the Burusho settled in Shimshal, and Wakhi elements are to be found in place-names in all the northern part of the country.

563 How far do these linguistic divisions represent also ethnic divisions? Are the Wakhi-speakers (Guwicho, sg. Gults, Guwi-čo, Gu.i-ts), the Burushaski-speakers (Burûsho, sg. Burûshin, Buru-šo, Buru-ši-n) and the Shina-speakers (sg. and pl. Shèn, Šɛ-n) to be regarded as racially distinct peoples?

[1] The figure 20,076 given in the Kashmir Census Report 1931, Vol. XXV p. 237, appears to be incorrect. It is still incorrect if the figures for Werchikwar are taken into account.

Ridgeway G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 Afg. Afghanistan Acc
4 AV3 Dard
Burushe AV 7

487 difficult pass on to the Shimshal Pamir, from whence a road goes to Ujadbai in the Sirikol Valley. On this Pamir dwell
563 a number of Kirghiz, who pay tribute to the Thum of Hunza,
651 and here the wild yák (*P. grunniens*) and the kyang
[136] (*E. Hemionus*) find their most western limit. The Pamir appears to lie north-west and south-east. From its north side the Kara Kuchkar Pass leads to Raskum, once a flourishing settlement, situated on one of the many branches which form the south-western source of the Yarkund River.
[162] Considerably further to the north-east are the two small communities of Pakpooh and Shakshooh, situated on different tributary streams. Pakpooh is said to contain about 4,000 and Shakshooh about 5,000 souls, and they are situated respectively at an elevation of about 10,000 and 9,000 feet.
[142] Both pay tribute to the ruler of Hunza. These curious
[197] people, of whom very little is known, are of Aryan race, and are described as being of very fair and ruddy complexion. Their language is Chagatai Turki, but, like the Ghalchah tribes of Sirikol and the countries north of the Hindoo Koosh to the westward, many of them speak Persian also. Dr. Bellew,[1] who met some men of the tribe, speaks of them as being a tall, very fair, and handsome race, of a purely Aryan physiognomy, and describes them as poorly clad, carrying matchlocks, of timid and subdued demeanour, and very cautious of giving any information regarding themselves. He mentions that they spoke Turki to other people, but conversed among themselves in a totally different language. He says that they are Mussulmans of the Shiah sect, like the Wakhis and Badakhshis,—that is, Maulais.

Nearly due north of Hunza is the small mountain state of Sirikol. The rulers of the two states have ever maintained a close friendship in spite of the mountains which separate them. From Girtchah in Goohjal, Tashkurgan is reached in eight days. Horses can only travel by the Kilik route, which is longer than that by the Kirish Pass; but the road is excellent and open all the year to both horses and camels. For about two months in summer the road by Misgar is impracticable for horses on account of the depth of the stream that has to be forded. The route by Rishipjerab and Derdee is then used, but men on foot can travel by Misgar at all times. Good roads also lead to Lungar and Kabr-i-Bosai in Wakhan territory.

000 In Wakhan, Sirikol, and Yarkund, the name of Kunjoot

[1] Bellew's *Kashmir and Kashghar*.

Sir Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 AUS Afghanistan XUS
4 AV3 Dard AVJ
Burushi AV7

by them, not a single fowl is to be seen. These peculiarities are strictly confined to the Shin caste, and, together with other customs which will come under notice presently, afford good grounds for supposing that they were a race of Hindoos who came from the south, and, pressing up the Indus Valley, established a Hindoo state in these remote regions under the crest of the Hindoo Koosh.

The next in order and the most numerous caste are the Yeshkuns, who form the entire population of Hunza, Nager, and Ponyal, and nearly all the population of Yassin, besides being numerically superior in Gilgit, Sai, Darel, and Astor. In Hunza and Nager they do not call themselves Yeshkun, but Boorish; and in Yassin, Woorshik and Boorisho. The language spoken, in slightly varying dialects, in these three states is known as Boorishki, Boorishaski, or Woorishki. The term "Khajoona," applied by the Gilgitis to the language as spoken in Nager, is never used in that country, and the old name also lingers in Yassin, which is still known as Woorshigoom. This language, of which an account is given in Appendix A, differs markedly from all languages in the neighbouring valleys. It has, I believe, been pronounced on good authority to belong to the Turanian family of languages.

In the colder climate of Hunza and Yassin, the people of this caste have ruddy complexions, and fair and even red hair is not uncommon. The Boorish of Nager show a somewhat different type. Many of them are short, thick-set men, with prominent cheek-bones, thick features, and thin beards. These characteristics, joined to their unwarlike nature, are probably due to an infusion of Tartar blood from Iskardo, gained during the time that Nager was subject to the Makpon ruler of Iskardo. If the Boorish are originally of Turanian origin, they have received at some time so large an infusion of Aryan blood as to have almost entirely swamped their original characteristics. Mr. Drew points out that the restrictions on their intermarriage with the Shins makes them the purer race of the two, and though these restrictions are not always closely observed, the Yeshkuns of Hunza and Nager would have little opportunity for profiting by their non-observance, so that their dash of Aryan blood must have been obtained before the appearance of the Shins. There does not appear to be any good foundation for Dr. Leitner's suggestion that the Yeshkuns are probably the product of intermarriage between the Shins and some aboriginal race. Considerable rivalry exists between the Shins and Yeshkuns,